

GOODNESS GOING BEFORE NO. 3329

A SERMON
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*“Thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness.”
Psalm 21:3*

OUR text is one of many instances of the way in which words change their meanings. The word “prevent” as we now use it, has a very different meaning from that which it had when our translators used it. It now signifies to get before one, to stop up his path, to prevent his going a certain way, just as the angel “prevented” Balaam, standing with his sword drawn in his hand that he might not pass that way.

This is only the modern use of the word, but the real and ancient use of it was simply “to go before.” “Thou goest before him with the blessings of goodness.” That is the real meaning of the word, and when we speak of “preventing grace,” we do not intend to describe the grace that keeps us from sin, but the grace which goes before our actually believing in Christ—“prevenient grace” as we are accustomed to call it theologically, grace which comes to us while as yet we are not conscious of its power, or have no desire towards it.

The meaning of the text then, is not that Christ was prevented, or hindered, from doing anything that He wished to do, by God’s goodness, but that God’s goodness went before, preceded, heralded Him. That word “preceded” has taken in our language in the present age the force and meaning which the word “prevent” had at the time of the translation of our authorized version of the Bible, so that now we should say instead, “Thou precedest him, goest before him, with the blessings of thy goodness.”

I shall take the text on this occasion then, in two ways. First, noticing *its application to our Lord Jesus Christ personally*, and *then its application to Him mystically*, that is to say, to *every believing soul that is truly in Him*.

First, then—

I. ITS APPLICATION TO OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST PERSONALLY.

It is quite certain that God did precede Him with the blessings of goodness, that is to say, before our Lord Jesus Christ actually came into the world and bowed His head in death, multitudes of spirits were given to Him as His reward, that tens of thousands entered into God’s redemption by virtue of an atonement that was not as yet offered, and washed away their sins in a fountain filled with blood which had not been literally opened, but which was opened in the purpose of God, and in its divine operation from before the foundation of the world, for is He not called “the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world”?

Brethren, see the wondrous power of the death of our Savior, His blood not only cries from the ground when it is spilt, but it cried all adown the ages which preceded the actual blood-shedding. It opened the gates of heaven to sinners, it was sprinkled on the consciences of believers, and made sinful men to be “accepted in the Beloved” even before it had dropped in bloody sweat in Gethsemane, or had been made to flow in streams under the lash in Gabbatha, or had been poured forth from the five sacred wounds upon the cross of Calvary. “Thou precedest him with the blessings of goodness.”

Just as some mighty conquerors when they entered in triumph into Rome not only had behind them the trophies of their victory, but before them the streets were strewn with flowers, and made sweet with the perfumes rained upon them before they came, so was it with the Savior. Before He came the world

was blessed by His coming, before He Himself appeared I may say that death and hell were defeated in anticipation.

Just as in our own land there is a brightness that covers the sky before the sun has actually risen above the horizon, so was it with the world, there was light in it before Christ came. It was light, however, which came from Him, for He is the light of the world, the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, but it came before He Himself appeared. In this verse then, it must be said of King Jesus, “Thou precededest Him with the blessings of goodness.”

And to ponder another phase of this same thought, our Lord Jesus Christ was *honored among the sons of men, before He had performed His great work.*

We honor our Lord because He has redeemed us, and it is this that makes them sing before the eternal throne, “He hath loved us, and redeemed us unto God by his blood.” But long before the redemption price had been paid I doubt not that Christ was honored by the saints in heaven, for they knew that their coming there was on the same ground and footing as the saints do now. I believe, therefore, that long before He lived and died on earth they cast their crowns at His feet and said, “Thou are worthy.”

I have frequently heard it said that there was no faith in heaven, but I have never been able to receive the doctrine. At any rate, there must have been faith in heaven before Christ died. The celestial spirits must have had a firm conviction that Christ would come upon the earth, and must have felt that their security depended upon the infallible oath and promise that in the fullness of time He would offer Himself as a sacrifice.

Indeed, it seems to me that there is faith in heaven still, as to that matter, for they have to believe as we do in the second advent, in the resurrection of the dead and in many wondrous promises which as yet have not been fulfilled.

Certainly, beloved, we may say of the Master that His head was crowned with the glory of the thorn crown before it was crowned with the shame, and in this sense He was preceded with the blessings of goodness. Abraham saw His day, he saw it and was glad, and in that gladness of Abraham Jesus Christ rejoiced. David sang of Him, and rested upon Him with such faith that in that faith the Savior found a solace. All those who were able to look through that smoke of the types and ceremonies, and to see the substance of the true redemption, all gave honor and glory to Him, and this I say was before He had actually won that glory by His death—“Thou precededest him with the blessings of goodness.”

It seems to me, however, that the text need not be read literally, or interpreted exactly according to its words, but the spirit of it is more to be observed. That spirit appears to be this, that Christ does not tardily obtain from His father the blessings of goodness, but *they come from God with freeness and divine liberality*, so that it may truly be said, “Thou precededest him with the blessings of goodness.” Take an instance, our Savior says, “I will not pray the Father for you, for the Father himself loveth you, for ye have loved me.” It was as if He put it in these words and had said, “I should not have to wait pleading at the throne, for the Father Himself is so willing to give, that He will precede me with the blessings of goodness.”

Ah, my dear friends, if it is a promise which belongs to us poor pleaders that before we call He will answer, and while we are speaking He will hear, do you not think that this blessing emphatically belongs to the Great Intercessor the Lord Jesus, so that the Father precedes Him with “the blessings of goodness”? We are accustomed to sing to Him as pleading before the eternal throne, but we must forever banish from our minds all idea of His needing to plead because God is unwilling to hear.

Nay, what the Son desires, the Father desires, that which He seeks at the divine throne is flowing from that throne, and His intercession it not the cause of it, but the channel through which it comes to us. We know that God’s goodness was not caused by the death of Christ.

*“’Twas not to make the Father’s love
Towards His people known,*

*That Jesus, from the realms above,
On His kind errand came.*

*'Twas not the pangs that He endured,
Nor all the woes He bore,
That God's eternal love procured,
For God was love before."*

God loved His people with a love that surpassed all thought before the Savior came, and now that that Savior pleads for us His plea is not the cause of the blessing, but the channel through which the blessing comes down to us, "Thou preceded him with the blessings of goodness."

But then, beloved, what a sweet thought this is, that wherever the Savior comes, *God's blessings come with Him, come behind Him, no, even come before Him*. Sometimes when a man walks, his shadow goes before him. The shadow of Peter healed the sick, and so the shadow of the Savior when He is coming to a soul begins to heal it. Why, I have known some who have been blessed by the very shadow of Christ. I mean, that before they were actually converted, before the new heart and the right spirit were given to them, the very shadow of Christ, at least more or less, made them desire to change their ways.

The very shadow of Christ, I say, falling before them had somewhat of a healing effect upon their souls, even before they had put their fingers into the print of the nails or thrust their hands into His side. You, brethren, who have had communion with Christ, will know that before you are actually conscious of the love of Christ being shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Ghost, you will often have some monitions of it, for a calm suddenly comes upon you before He Himself comes.

He makes all things ready just as He did at the Passover, when He sent His disciples to prepare the upper room. His Holy Spirit often comes to make ready your heart to receive Him, so that when He comes you may be ready to open the door because He has been preceded by the "blessings of goodness." Even before He comes, comes a blessing from Him.

Beloved, what must be the treasures that are in Him, what the troops of angelic mercies that surround Him, what the heavenly blessings, what the waves upon waves of celestial benedictions that must be in Himself, in His own person!

If His garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, where did they get the sweet odor from but from Himself? They smell of the cassia, but He is the cassia. "A bundle of myrrh is my Well-beloved unto me." As a cluster of camphor in the vineyards of Engedi is He to those who know His fragrance and delight in His sweetness. We may say of Him, "Thou preceded him with the blessings of goodness," but as for Himself He is goodness itself. Do you not think that Bernard of Clairvaux had the right idea when he penned that ancient hymn which has been so sweetly translated—

*"Jesus, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence rest."*

Then he goes on—

*"To those who fall how kind Thou art!
How good to those that seek!*

*But what to those who find? Ah! this
Nor tongue, nor pen can show;*

*The love of Jesus—what it is,
None but His loved ones know."*

So, then, we leave this point as it refers to our Lord personally, reminding ourselves that all the blessings of God's goodness are "Yea, and Amen, in Christ Jesus to the glory of God," to us, and they all come to us through Him. We now turn to our second point—

II. ITS APPLICATION TO OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST MYSTICALLY, that is, TO EVERY BELIEVING SOUL IN HIM.

We too, can say to God "Thou hast preceded *us* with the blessings of goodness."

I want you to go back a little in your own histories. Just take out your diaries, and turn back to the book of His mercies. I want you to think of, *prevenient providences*. You may open your children's hymn book if you like, and you may sing—

*"I thank the goodness and the grace,
Which on my birth have smiled;
That in this land I passed my days,
A happy English child.*

*I was not born a little slave,
To labor in the sun;
Wishing I were put in my grave,
And all my labor done.*

*I was not born as thousands are,
Where God was never known;
And taught to pray a senseless prayer
To blocks of wood and stone.*

*My God, I thank Thee who hast planned,
A better lot for me;
And placed me in this happy land,
Where I can hear of Thee."*

I remember hearing it once said that this was a hymn for little Pharisees, but the man who said that did not know any better, and was therefore to be pitied. It is a hymn which a child may very gratefully sing, and which we may all join in, when we thank God for the providence which caused us to be born where the Gospel is preached.

Let us be thankful too, many of us, that *we were born in households where the name of Jesus was amongst the earliest sounds that caught our ear*. We were rocked in our cradles to the hymns of Zion, and the name of the Savior mingled with the very hush of the lullaby. With some here, alas! it was oaths and curses, and the first sounds they heard were drunken brawls and profanity and blasphemy.

If, dear friends—as many of you have been—you were born into Christian families, I want you to think of it, and then say, "Thou precedest him with the blessings of goodness." Then after your birth, but long before your conversion, what wonderful providences fell to our lot! Our conversion may even have been brought about by the most trifling circumstances.

When you were a bound apprentice, young man, perhaps you were from an ungodly family, and it was a remarkable providence which put you under a Christian master. And you, my young friend, when you first went out to service, or as nursery governess, it was a great mercy that you had a Christian fellow servant or met with someone to speak with you concerning the things of God.

How many chances, as we say, there were that you would not go to such a place, and make them into strong helpers to your highest good. And since then, just think over the preserving providences that you had, even before you were converted. If you had died before conversion, where must you have been? Think too, of the providences which tended to bring you to the place where you live, and where you first heard the Word, and the providences which prepared your soul to be saved.

I have no doubt that sometimes a man who has been afflicted is more likely to be blessed by a sermon than he would be if he had not been so afflicted. And so, the loss of a child, or having a sick wife, or a serious injury to property, are all ploughs which God uses in providence to make a man ready to receive the Gospel. "I should never have seen," said one man, "if I had not lost my eyes." "Ah," said another, "I should never have been able to run, if I had not broken my legs."

Our so-called misfortunes are sometimes our greatest benedictions, and are often overruled by God to be the means by which we are brought into the way of being blessed, and where He may afterwards meet with us with the blessings of goodness.

You have been praying for prosperity, my friend, but God has not heard you, and you now say that God does not hear prayer. You have asked for a certain position, and He has not given it to you, for it is a position, perhaps, in which you would be ruined. Perhaps you are of such a spirit that if you were not afflicted in providence you would be running into all manner of mischief, but God loves you well, and therefore He will not let you rush blindly down to destruction, but puts a clog upon you to keep you back. Let us think then, brethren, of the providence which came to us before our quickening.

But a wider field opens up to us when we come to think not merely of preventing providence, but of *preventing grace*, the grace that came to us before we knew Christ at all. First, brethren, there was *the grace of restraint* which kept some of us back from committing sins which might have placed us out of the world, out of society, or out of the reach of the ordinary means of grace. It is something to have been kept from drunkenness, it will be a theme for perpetual gratitude if we have been kept from the grosser vices by which the body as well as the soul may become defiled and polluted.

It is no small blessing to have preserved in social life an untarnished reputation among men. Had such a woman fallen, she might never have dared to go where the Gospel was preached and was blessed to her. Had such a young man really put his hand into the till, when he was severely tempted to do it, he might have lost his standing and never have been at Sunday school or in the Bible class where God met with him.

Perhaps you have been strongly tempted to do a certain thing, but something came upon you—you did not know what it was—which told you you must not do it. Preventing grace has come and prevented you from knowing the depths of your carnal nature, because providence has put you into a position where you cannot do as you would.

I do not doubt, brethren, that there is a grace which precedes quickening, a grace for which theology has no name, which prepares the soul for the reception of the divine Word, which makes the soul ready before the living seed comes. It is a kind of grace, at any rate, which educates the man, which makes him candid, casts out his prejudice, makes him live honestly, and keeps him from falling into conceit.

We know some who are unconverted whom we are very thankful to know, for we have great hopes of them. If they have not received the truth in the love of it, yet they have a great love for the truth, and do not by their outward actions lead others into sin. I trust, in some cases at least, that these are not mere Pharisees, but that of many of them we may truly say, "Thou preceded him with the blessings of goodness."

Now I shall leave this point, and go on to remark that the text is true of us who are believers in the following senses—God *has preceded us in the order of merit*. If He had stopped until we deserved His grace He would never have come. We had never known salvation if He had waited until we were worthy to receive it, for we are not worthy now.

For years some of us have been serving Him, either by preaching the Gospel or in some other way, but we have no merit even now. Our poor merits have broken their legs and cannot travel, nay, our merit has been waterlogged, it has gone down, and foundered at sea. We have done with all thought of our own merit. And yet let us recollect that when we come to God, if we are never so guilty, He precedes us with the blessings of goodness. Though our vileness would seem to be upon our forehead, like the leprosy of old, yet we have access with boldness unto this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory to be revealed.

Truly, “His ways are not as our ways, neither are his thoughts as our thoughts, for so high as the heavens are above the earth even so are His ways above our ways, and his thoughts above our thoughts.” I have not run an inch in the road of merit, but He has run ten thousand leagues, for in the road of merit, He precedes us with the blessings of His goodness.

And it is not only true in the sense of merit, but it is equally true *in the sense of desire*. God did not wait to save us until we desired to be saved. Let me not be misunderstood, however, in the assertion. Did not Christ die to save us, before we were born? Was not the Gospel sent to us before we desired to hear it? Although we sat in the house of God indifferent and did not care about it, yet it was ringing in our ears all the while. And even if we had desires, yet where did those desires come from? Were they our own desires, or were they given to us by Christ?

Those of my brethren who choose to take the alternative may do so, but as far as I am concerned, I must say—

*“’Twas not that I did choose Thee,
For, Lord, that could not be;
This heart would still refuse Thee,
But Thou hast chosen me.”*

I cannot take any credit to myself for coming to Christ. I did come, but I am persuaded it was a secret whisper of His love that attracted my soul, and because of that text which Jeremiah gives us so blessedly, “I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” Or as the poet sings—

*“He drew me, and I followed on,
Charmed to obey the voice divine.”*

God, in this, preceded us with the blessings of goodness. He taught us to desire, when we neither willed nor ran, and so fulfilled the text, “it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.”

Then, besides this, God also precedes us in *endeavor*. Brethren, you and I have been endeavoring to grow in grace, and notwithstanding the little progress we have made, yet, on the whole, God has given us a great deal more than our exertions might have led us to expect. When I look on the little zeal which some of us exhibit in private prayer, upon the little diligence which some of us have in studying the Word of God, it is full of wonder that we should have been enabled to have so much joy, and to have so much knowledge of divine things as we have.

We have sown but little, and reaped but little compared with what we might have done, but our harvest has been of infinitely greater value than the sowing might have led us to expect. Christian, you are now more advanced in the life divine than you might have been, or would have been, on the mere ground of your own exertions. You have not advanced far because you have striven with but little earnestness, but you have had a far greater result than you might have expected.

Sometimes I have found in my own soul that I have longed to have communion with Christ, I have thought that if I could but get a whisper from Him I would be content, and or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib. I heard no whisper fall on my outward ears, but His voice to my soul was clear and sweet.

I had no vision of Christ granted to my bodily eye, but before my faith, there stood my Beloved near to me, and my heart was charmed by His presence, long before I thought I could ever reach such a state. Christ came, and seconded my endeavors, nay, carried me far beyond all my endeavors. When, on the other hand, I lay like a dull, dead log, and my spirit seemed unable to move, suddenly the wheels of my soul began to whirl until the axles thereof grew hot with speed.

Certainly too, the Lord has preceded us in *the order of our experience as to time*. Mark tells us that when Christ fed the multitudes they sat down on the green grass, and that there was much grass in that place. God knew that Christ would want a banqueting hall, and therefore He made a carpet for Him long

before He came there. The pasture must come before the sheep, or else while the grass grows the flock will starve. Always notice the forestalling of God's providence, and the forestalling of God's grace. He prepares before our actual necessity comes.

Have you not observed this in your trials? You had a great trouble a little while ago, you had a death in the house, but a month or two before the death came you had an unusual season of joy, and you did not know why. Now you know it was sent to prepare you for your unexpected trouble. Or perhaps it was another way, this last trouble of yours did not oppress you as you thought it would because you had had another trouble before, and another before that, so that you had, as it were, grown used to troubles.

You had been in the fire till you had become like a sword blade that gets annealed in the heat. I am told that before army horses are taken into battle they are trained to bear the noise of guns firing. Certainly God trains His own chargers, and makes them bear all the din and tumult of battle. He prepares us by small trials to bear larger ones, goes before us, and leaves thus the blessings of goodness to our souls.

He is our great sympathetic Pioneer, going before us through the thick forest and jungle of trial and trouble, clearing a way for us through the brambles and thorns, and making straight in the wilderness a highway for His people, being to us as He was to Israel a cloudy fiery pillar, and so, preceding us with the blessings of goodness.

Yet again He sometimes precedes us *in our labors*. Before our missionaries went to the South Seas there was a peculiar preparation of the minds of the people. They had a tradition or legend that white men would come in ships, and tell them of the true God. Their minds were ready, they were looking for the vessels, and when they arrived, the people were not only waiting, but willing to receive them.

You too, will perhaps find, some of you who may be going to sail to Australia, or change your position in life, that the people among whom you are going are prepared for you, and you are especially prepared as God's witness for them. Do believe that wherever you are going, that God who knows all about you, and who orders your footsteps, will prepare your way before you. He will not let you go an unknown path, but one that should be trodden by the foot of His love before it shall be trodden by you. He will precede you with the blessings of goodness.

And lastly, my text has a very sweet meaning when we think that *God will precede even our expectations*. Some of us never expected the Christian life to be as happy as it has been. We have had—oh, how often!—some expectations about heaven. I do not care to read many books about heaven. If most of the books that have ever been written about heaven were destroyed, I think we should know nearly as much as we do now, with them. We know more about heaven, I believe, from our hymns than we do from our books. The hymn—

*“Jerusalem, my happy home,
Name ever dear to me;
When shall my labors have an end
In joy, and peace, and Thee!”*

has more of heaven in it than half the books that have been written upon the subject, or that other hymn—

*“Jerusalem the golden, with milk and honey blest,
Beneath your contemplation sink heart and voice oppressed:
We know not, oh we know not, what joys await us there:
What radiance of glory, what bliss beyond compare.”*

Now these hymns take us up even into the pearly gated city itself, and sometimes when we have been singing—

*“On Jordan's stormy bank I stand,
And cast a wistful eye*

*To Canaan's fair and happy land,
Where my possessions lie."*

We have almost seen the—

*"Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood,
Arrayed in living green,"*

and we have been ready to ask to go to be with our Savior, with whom we shall dwell forever. We expect to meet there a blessed company of the saints there, we expect to have wondrous nearness to the Lord Jesus Christ, we are expecting, every one of us, to have a bright crown, we are expecting to have perfect freedom from every ill, from pain, from sin, and from sorrow, and to have what the apostle calls "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

We are expecting to see such a place as imagination never pictured, to hear such music as has never ravished mortal ear, we are expecting to drink from such pure streams as never flowed from Lebanon's untrodden snows, we expect something beyond what eye, or ear, or heart, can teach us.

Well, brethren, when we get there we shall find, any of us who have had great thoughts about heaven, that our minds were too narrow, and our thoughts too contracted. We shall be like the Queen of Sheba when she said, "I heard a good report in my own land, but the half has not been told me." We shall not be able to turn to the old Book and say, "Ah, God, Thou hast not fulfilled Thy promise! I do not find this state of glory so wondrous as I had been led to think it was." No, beloved, but we shall have to say even there, "Thou preceded my imagination, my expectancy, with the blessings of goodness," and we shall have to add—

*"Imagination's utmost stretch
In wonder dies away."*

I like that verse which our friends sometimes sing which says that we shall—

*"Sing with rapture and surprise
His lovingkindness in the skies,"*

for so I doubt not, for a long time, at any rate, in heaven, surprise will be one of the most blessed of our emotions—surprise to think that heaven should be such as it is, that Christ should be so glorious, and that we should be permitted to partake of His glory. We shall feel that God has exceeded His own word, and outrun His own promise, and that it was not in human speech, even with God Himself using it, to convey to the human mind any adequate idea of this which surpasses all comprehension and imagination—the joys which God has for those that love Him.

My only regret in thinking on such a text as this is that *some of you have no part in it*. Oh, friends, may God give you grace to look to Him! How can you live on the brink of a stream and never think of the fountain? How can you receive daily mercies, and yet so cruelly treat your God who gives you everything? Worse than the ox treats its owner, for the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass its master's crib, but you do not know, thou dost not consider.

Ah! He hath indeed preceded you with the blessings of His goodness in keeping you alive, in permitting you to hear the Gospel, and above all, in this one respect, that this very night He bids you to turn to Him. The Father's heart beats towards you, and He says to you, "My erring one, come to Me, come to Me! He that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out. Turn thee, turn thee, why wilt thou die."

*"Return, O wanderer, to thy home,
Thy Father calls for thee;
No longer now an exile roam*

*In guilt and misery;
Return, return."*

If you come to Him there shall be no rejection, but a warm reception, and you shall be blessed forever in Jesus Christ.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

PSALM 138:1-6

A Psalm of David

Verse 1. *I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.*

Before the heathen gods, however highly exalted—I will sing Thy praises as in their very teeth, and the magistrates and princes and kings who think themselves gods on earth—I will not fear them or be silenced by them.

2. *I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*

For Thou wert far more glorious in revelation than in creation—thy promise did greatly transcend every other display of Thyself above all we have ever known or conceived of Thee. Thou hast magnified Thyself by Thy covenant of grace, and Thy works of grace toward Thy people. For this worship and praise are forever due!

3. *In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.*

That is a thing to make a man sing—when in the day of trouble God comes to him, hears his prayer and works his deliverance, when none else can help. God's rescues demand our grateful songs, His deliverances our new anthems of exultant praise.

4. *All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth.*

When Your Gospel is preached, and they know it, they shall count it their honor to honor You. It is ignorance of its glory and grace that makes silence possible, but to hear it as God's Word of saving love is to be compelled to extol.

5. *Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great is the glory of the LORD.*

David was a king, and he danced before the ark, and he anticipated the time when other kings should not be ashamed of exuberant rejoicing in the King of kings. Oh, that it were come! May the Lord hasten it in His own time, and the choral hosts of heaven be swelled by the presence of the crowned monarchs of earth!

6. *Though the LORD is high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly:*

That is a sweet text. One who was a scoffer met a humble child of God one morning, and he said to him, "Tell me, is Your God a great God or a little God," and the poor man said, "Sir, He is both, for though He is so great that the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him, yet He makes Himself so little that He condescends to dwell in my poor heart." Ah, it was sweetly said. He who fills the heavens, nay, all things, will be our abiding Guest and Friend if we will but welcome Him.

6. *But the proud he knoweth afar off.*

He has enough of them. He does not want them to come near to Him. When they are miles away He knows all about them. They make a fair show, but He sees that it is all a fable and pretence. He knows them—afar off!

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.